

# **\*\*ATTENTION\*\***

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## WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF GAME

600 N. Capitol Way  
Olympia, WA 98504

# CONTROLLING NUISANCE DEER



"We just love seeing the deer and having them around, *but* when they eat my vegetable garden and my wife's flowers, something has to be done." This statement is uttered hundreds of times each year by Washington residents both urban and rural. It is something like saying, "I want my cake, but I want to eat it too."

This publication will give you the information you need to solve the majority of problems with nuisance deer. Because deer, like people, are not all the same, what works in one situation may not work in the next. For example, the deer that lives in or near an urban area and becomes accustomed to the sight, sound and smells associated with people, may not react at all to repellents. These deer are as different from their wilderness relatives as city folks are from their cousins, who have lived their life on a farm.

## DECISION TIME

If you want to have the deer and your garden, you should first look at the problem and ask yourself if some changes can be made to accommodate both. Deer love roses, but will not normally touch rhododendrons. Therefore, you may decide to change plant types to eliminate the conflict between your garden and the deer. Planting the vegetables that deer normally will not eat such as cucumbers, potatoes, corn and squash on the side of the garden that the deer usually bother may solve the problem. Moving the garden to a more exposed location is another possible option.

Before you go any further, look at your surroundings. Deer prefer to live where they have protection. Remove that tall grass or patch of brush. Prune those trees that have limbs clear to the ground that provide security. Often it is much easier to solve problems by changing the conditions that contribute to the problem than it is to construct a security system.

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## FENCING

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Fencing is the one sure way that deer can be kept from areas where they are not welcome. When building a fence, keep in mind that you must enclose the entire area. Deer will simply walk around one, two or three-sided fences.

Deer can be kept out of gardens with six-foot high net type wire fencing. Regular chicken wire will do the job as long as the posts are not more than 12 feet apart and the wire is stretched tight. Be sure the wire is kept close to the ground so the deer do not crawl under. Believe it! Deer will crawl. Other net fencing such as hog wire or cyclone fencing will also do the job as long as it is six feet high and properly installed. Solid board fences and solid hedges need only be five and one half feet high. Deer will not jump over objects when they cannot see what is on the other side.

Electric fencing has been used in numerous configurations. Like repellents, some work in one instance but may not work in all. New technology is being advanced in this area, and some new fence types will turn most, if not all deer. Because long-term testing has not taken place, we cannot guarantee that all electric fences will be 100% effective. They should be considered a tool, much the same as commercial repellents and home remedies.

Attached are diagrams of two simple types of electric fences that you may wish to try. Be sure to check local ordinances prior to installing electric fences. If you desire to fence a large area (over two acres) we recommend that you contact your local farm store for information on newer (also more complex) types of electric fences being used to exclude deer and other nuisance animals. In all cases, fences should be built prior to planting. Animals that have not had an opportunity to develop feeding habits are much easier to control.

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## HOME REMEDIES

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Repellents range over a wide spectrum much like the old game of animal, vegetable or mineral. The family dog securely tied in or near the garden has solved many deer problems. A portable radio placed in a barrel and turned on at night can also be effective in gardens. The barrel should have both ends cut out and be lying on its side. Low wattage light bulbs hung in vines and plugged into a Christmas tree blinker so that when it blinks it casts lines of shadows, have been very effective in numerous places. Remember though, that when repellents are used, the repelling effect on one deer may not always effect the next. Human hair, deodorant soap and blood meal placed in old nylons or cheesecloth bags and hung along plant rows or in the foliage of plants have each been found to have repelling effects on deer.

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## COMMERCIAL REPELLENTS

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There are several types of commercial deer repellents on the market. Like home remedies, all work on some deer but none seem to work on all. Repellents work either through taste or smell to keep the deer from eating the plants in the area where they are applied. They do not actually chase deer away from the neighborhood. You may find repellents in your farm or garden store under the brand names: Hinder, Big Game Repellent (also called Deer-away), Arasan 42-S, Chew-not, Chaperone, Magic Circle and others. We make no claims as to effectiveness nor do we endorse any particular brand. Be sure to use commercial repellents according to the directions provided by the manufacturer.

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## LANDSCAPING WITH DEER RESISTANT PLANTS

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Few, if any plant species, are totally resistant to deer. If there is an extremely heavy population of deer, or if natural browse is in short supply, then deer will eat foods they would otherwise consider unpalatable. Listed are some plants that have been found to be generally resistant to browsing by deer.

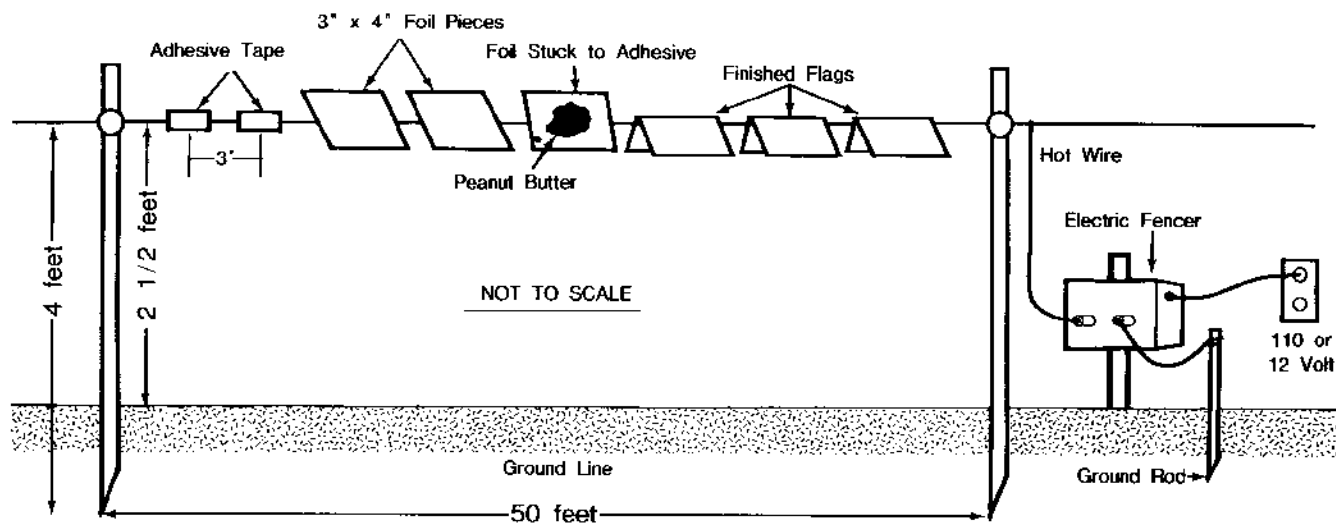
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### COMMON NAMES

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Ash	Persimmon
Black Locust	Pine
Blue Lily-of-the-Nile	Prickly Phlox
Boxwood	Red Elderberry
Butterfly Bush	Redwood Sorrel
Calla Lily	Rhododendron
Carolina Cherry Laurel	(except azalea-leaved types)
China-berry Tree	Rosemary
Clematis	Scotch Broom
Columbine	Sea Buckthorn
Daffodil	She Oak
Daphne	Snowflake
Devil's Poker	Soapbark Tree
Dogwood	Spruce
English Ivy	Tree Pepper
Foxglove	Trillium
Giant Reed	Wax Myrtle
Hellebore	Western Spice Bush
Hercules' Club	Wild Cucumber
Holly	
Iris	
Japanese Rose	
Jasmine	
Jonquil	
Larkspur	
Lupine	
Matilija Poppy	
Narcissus	
Nightshade	
Oxalis	
Peony	

## FENCE ASSEMBLY #1



This fence has proven itself in numerous experimental and field situations, i.e., truck gardens, orchard, home gardens, strawberry beds, tree nurseries, etc. Cost, exclusive of the electric fencer, is approximately \$50-60 per mile of fencing.

This fence is most effective when installed and energized before the plants are introduced. The smell of peanut butter causes the deer to sniff or lick the foil, which, in turn, shocks the deer.

Deer that do not develop feeding habits in an area will avoid it after plants and gardens are planted. However, if the deer are already accustomed to feeding there, this type of fencing may have little value.

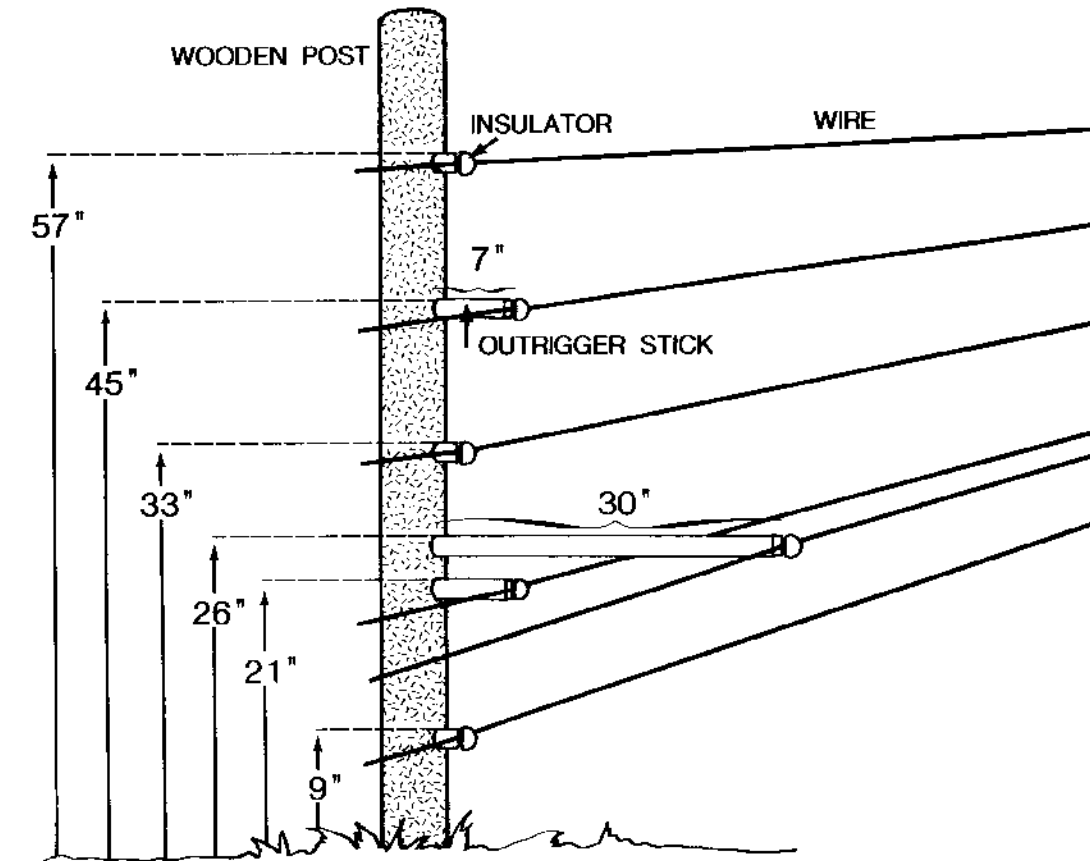
### FENCING MATERIALS FOR FENCE ASSEMBLY #1

1. Four-foot stakes at 50-foot intervals (wooden or electric fence posts).
2. Standard electric fencing insulators.
3. 19 or 20-gauge smooth wire.
4. Electric fence charger, 6, 12 or 110 volt will work.
5. Aluminum foil heavy duty kitchen grade.
6. Adhesive tape, one inch wide.
7. Peanut butter.
8. Peanut oil (to thin peanut butter).
9. Plastic syringe to apply peanut butter and oil mixture to flags. Can also be done with a paintbrush or cloth.

### STEPS IN CONSTRUCTING THE BARRIER

1. Cut four-foot stakes and sharpen.
2. Attach insulators three feet from sharpened end.
3. Distribute stakes at 50-foot intervals along right-of-way in either bare soil or mowed grass.
4. Set posts with insulators on the side from which deer approach.
5. String wire - 50-pound tension is sufficient.
6. Tear off two-inch pieces of adhesive tape and stick along underside of wire so that adhesive surface is skyward. Space three to four feet apart.
7. Cut aluminum foil into 3"x4" pieces.
8. Attach aluminum foil pieces to adhesive with 4" dimension crossing wire and glossy side skyward.
9. Mix peanut butter with peanut oil to obtain a mixture which can be spread easily on the cloth adhesive tape. Generally, one part peanut butter to one part peanut oil is workable.
10. Turn flag over and apply peanut butter and oil mixture to backing of tape. Fold flag with tape inside toward ground.

## FENCE ASSEMBLY #2



### MATERIALS AND CONSTRUCTION OF FENCE #2

1. Wooden posts - Set two feet deep every 30 feet. Posts may need to be set deeper if the ground is uneven.
2. Outrigger sticks - These can be made from wooden dowels one inch in diameter.
3. Wire - 14-gauge, galvanized soft iron wire works well, although barbed wire may be used.
4. Insulators - Either plastic or ceramic insulators will do the job as long as they can be attached to the end of the dowels.
5. Electric fence unit - A standard electric cattle fence unit may be used. Note - it is only necessary to electrify the three wires on the outrigger sticks. The other three wires should be connected to the ground terminal of the fencer, which, in turn, is attached to a ground wire.

Special Instructions: